

Hall of Fame Inductees

Engineering Heritage Queensland

Professor Roger William Hercules HAWKEN

MICE MIEAust

1878 - 1947

INDUCTED IN 2003

Roger Hawken graduated in Civil Engineering from University of Sydney with first class honours in 1900, and spent 10 years gaining professional engineering experience both in regional NSW and with the British Government in the Malay States. Roger Hawken came to Queensland in 1912 as the first lecturer in Civil Engineering at the new University of Queensland. He was appointed as Dean of Engineering in 1919, and elected to the Senate in 1921 and President in 1923.

He took a prominent part in the amalgamation of the various engineering societies throughout Australia in the foundation of the Institution of Engineers Australia. He represented the Queensland Institute of Engineers at the conference which decided on amalgamation and was the representative of the Institute of Local Government Engineers on the Provisional Council set up to draft a constitution for the new Institution. He was a member of the Council from its first meeting in October 1919 until his death in 1947, holding the position of Vice President in 1921 and 1922 and President in 1923. In 1920 he was Chairman of the Brisbane Division and a member of the Divisional Committee from that time onwards. In 1931 the Institution awarded him the Peter Nichol Russell Medal.

Hawken was a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE), contributing papers on column design, and of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science. He was appointed Chairman of the Brisbane City Council Cross River Commission in 1926 which led to the construction

of the Walter Taylor Bridge, Indooroopilly Toll Bridge and the Story Bridge. In the 1920s he turned again to earth pressures and the stability of slopes; he thus was one of the pioneers of the study of soil mechanics, a subject generally neglected until the 1950s. In later work on rainfall runoff and flooding potential and the economic appraisal of engineering schemes, his ideas were well ahead of his time. He held many appointments to the Queensland Government including a consultancy on the Story Bridge design and was their representative on the Councils of the Standards Association of Australia and the National Association of Testing Authorities. At his suggestion in 1928 Queensland became the first state to legislate for compulsory registration of consulting engineers.

He occupied the Chair of Engineering and the office of Dean of the Faculty continuously for almost twenty-nine years. During this long period, he served the University of Queensland, the State of Queensland and the profession of engineering with distinction, his courtesy and tact, his technical knowledge and his wide experience of men and affairs being invaluable. He was a prolific writer and produced innumerable papers on technical subjects.

A major building and a Library at the Queensland University Campus at St Lucia, Brisbane are named in his honour, as well as a major road to the campus. The main lecture room at Engineers Australia Queensland Division is named the Hawken Auditorium, where the annual Hawken Address is usually given.